

WAR

For Anarchism

COMMENTARY

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Twopence

Contradictions *Exposed*

**MORE STALINIST
THAN STALIN**

THE definition of one kind of lunatic is a man with a split mind. Our leaders are mostly of this kind," says Herbert Read elsewhere in this issue. This seems to be particularly true of our "leaders" in connection with their attitude regarding Russia and the Communist Party. While Beaverbrook and other prominent politicians praise Stalin and Russia to the skies, Herbert Morrison calls the Communists "miserable people" and "semi-Nazi." This would be understandable if the Communist Party in this country and the Russian Government were not bound together by the closest connections. But the argument used to justify the suppression of the Communist Party in France and other countries and of the Daily Worker in this country (though unofficially) was that the Communists take orders from Moscow.

MALAYAN COMMUNISTS GAOLED

While Beaverbrook and Stalin were drinking toasts to the Freedom of the Press, a Singapore magistrate was sentencing two Chinese to 18 months rigorous imprisonment for assisting in the management of the Communist Party. The magistrate accepted "the police submission that the Malayan Communist Party was not pro-British."

Stalin has been able to obtain all the help he wanted from Beaverbrook and Co.; why then has he not put in a good word for the Daily Worker? Have not the Communists in this country pledged themselves to give their full support to Churchill? Is not Harry Pollitt encouraging the workers to go to it? If Stalin has not used his influence to restore to the Communist Party in this country the right to have a newspaper, it is probably because he does not consider the matter very important. If he does not think so, the Communists in this country should stop trying to get the support of influential people and spending money on advertisements.

TORY-COMMUNIST COALITION

That "Strike now in the West" is an empty slogan, and nothing more than that has been further proved by the attitude of the Communist Party at the Lancaster by-election.

Instead of supporting the Independent Liberal candidate, Colonel Ross, who advocated the creation of a second front in the West, the Communist Party sent a deputation to the Conservative headquarters and offered to work for the return of Second-Lieutenant Maclean, the National Government candidate. Maclean was backed by Churchill, who, so far, seems to be completely opposed to the opening of a new front. He proved this by defending Halifax after he had declared that it was impossible for Britain to attack in the West now. And has not Churchill defended Colonel Moore-Brabazon against all his critics?

Why should the Communist Party urge workers to sign petitions asking the Government to send an expeditionary force on the Continent, while, at the same time, it supports Tories completely opposed to that tactic or even openly hostile to Russia? Another case of split minds.

REVOLUTION IN EUROPE ANOTHER SLOGAN

We have often said in these columns that the British Government was not seriously concerned with the creation of revolutionary movements on the Continent. This view has been confirmed by the attitude taken by General De Gaulle regarding the assassination of Germans by French people. As the (self-appointed) leader of the French people he gave his orders. **French people must not shoot Germans.** Did he give this order in order to stop, as he said the spilling of blood in an unequal struggle? Such sentimental considerations are unlikely to sway the minds of people who rub their hands at the news that hundreds of thousands of Germans are blown to bits or burned alive. De Gaulle has no objections to British bombs killing French people, as most probably happens when the RAF bombs French ports. He has no objections to quixotic expeditions on the colonies where French people are involved.

We shall not discuss here if the shooting of German soldiers can have a revolutionary effect or not from our point of view, but we want to ask the people who have for months past glibly advocated a revolution on the

continent what they meant by it. When Churchill and lesser politicians advocate sabotage and make splendid calls of revolt, do they imagine that the people under Hitler's domination will carry on these revolutions without having to do any killing? The Beaverbrook Press will perhaps now initiate the French workers into Gandhi's tactics. Up to now there has been only talk of revolt and sabotage which cannot be carried out without a tremendous sacrifice of human lives. The British Government and their stooges like De Gaulle would not hesitate to sacrifice the lives of hundreds and thousands of French people if they thought it served their ends. But as we have pointed out before, they are afraid of a revolution. They know that the people who will take part in it will not be well-bred reactionaries à la De Gaulle. They know that when revolutions start they would be unable to control them. They prefer to wait to fight the Germans when the French people will not be left to their own initiative, but will be fighting under the orders of bourgeois generals who will see that the victory remains theirs.

The newspapers reported that Chile was the only country on the American continent that lodged a protest with the German Government regarding the shooting of the French hostages. It is needless to point out that the protest of such a weak country as Chile will have not the slightest effect. But it is significant that the U.S. has not thought it worth while. It offers another indication of the indifference of the "democracies" towards the attempts of the French people to revolt.

FREEDOM PRESS ROOMS

27 Belsize Road, Swiss Cottage, N.W.6

SERIES OF LECTURES

Readers of WAR COMMENTARY are invited to attend the weekly lectures held on Fridays at 7 p.m. and take part in the discussions

		SPEAKERS
17th October	Reform and Revolution	Tom Brown
24th October	Revolution and Counter-Revolution	F. A. Ridley
31st October	The Modern State	John Hewetson
7th November	The poets of the 1930's and their relationship to social questions...	Julian Symons
14th November	The role of the Syndicates in a Stateless Society	Tom Brown
21st November	Poets and Social Issues	George Woodcock
28th November	The tasks of the individual in the Social Revolution	Fredrick Lohr
5th December	The I.W.W. (The Industrial Workers of the World)	W. Gape
12th December	Anarchism and the land problem	George Woodcock
19th December	Historical episodes of the Anarchist Movement	Mat Kavanagh

Admission Free

FRIENDS OF FREEDOM PRESS

Bedlam Politics*by Herbert Read*

SPEAKING at the Royal Institution yesterday, the Soviet Ambassador invited us never to forget that good English expression, **First things first.**

An admirable sentiment which we can all approve.

But what are the first things which we should put first?

The first thing, according to Mr. Maisky, is to crush Hitlerite Germany—not, be it observed, to crush fascism—that might bring the mailed fist down on the heads of some of our friends—on Admiral Darlan's head, on General Franco's head, on Comrade Stalin's head—and on heads still nearer home.

No! Our politicians no longer revile fascism; they have invented an historical abstraction called "Hitlerite Germany," something which is neither Hitler nor Germany, neither fascism nor totalitarianism.

Is that putting first things first? Is it not rather an evasion of the real issue, which is now as it has always been the issue between freedom and tyranny.

When our leaders speak in unequivocal voices about political realities; when they admit that fascism is not confined to Italy or to Germany, but is a disease which has invaded every country in the world—Spain and France, Japan and the United States, Soviet Russia and the British Empire—then and then only shall we believe that they are putting first things first.

The reality is far otherwise. Our politicians are grotesque. They only need a bladder on the end of a stick to complete their clown-like appearance; an appearance which is nevertheless very deceptive; consider them:

Clown-politicians who hand out contracts with one hand and receive them with the other;

Clown-politicians who are patriotically inspired to defend their class interests with Swinton Committees and anti-comintern funds;

In a world in which truth is increasingly distorted and concealed to suit the interests of ruling minorities; in which conflicting propaganda seeks to confuse and paralyse the workers, Herbert Read stresses the necessity to maintain a Press which fights for truth, equality and freedom. The following is the text of his address to the inaugural meeting of the Friends of Freedom Press in the Conway Hall on 28th September, 1941.

Clown-politicians who do their buying in the Black Market; and their cooking in Whitehall;

Clown-politicians who launch their chartered platitudes on the deep Atlantic of their hypocrisy.

Now the hypocrite is nearly related to the lunatic. The definition of one kind of lunatic is a man with a split mind.

Our leaders are mostly of this kind. With one half of their mind they admire this fellow Hitler. He has abolished unemployment, which they could never succeed in doing; he has created the most efficient army in the world, which they envy; he has liquidated those troublesome trade unions; above all, he is now doing the best job of all—ridding the world of the Bolshevik menace. One side of the mind of our leaders finds fascism very very attractive.

But the other side of this split mind realizes that this fellow Hitler does not play the game. He is not a gentleman. He not only breaks all the rules of what is curiously called "civilized" warfare, drops bombs on private property, and on innocent civilians; he actually wants to pinch our markets, our shipping, our empire!

One could almost pity such tortured consciences, but then we realize that it is these idiots with a split mind who rule the demented world of to-day. A world in which the mad lead the mad.

For we have to admit that it is not our rulers alone who are mad. They have infected whole nations.

The extension of the war to Russia has achieved what the press calls the final unity of the British Nation. From the tory right to the communist left, we fight in one unbroken line.

Similarly, according to the same press, the virtual extension of the war to the United States has achieved a world-wide unity of the

democratic nations: they fight in one unbroken line.

Now when you find such an appearance of unity in the world, history leads us to suspect the most complete form of suppression and persecution.

Man is various. He divides into various psychological types, and according to his type, his feelings and opinions will differ.

It is natural that men should suffer, and progress consists in the discussion and reconciliation of differences. That is the dialectical principle of life itself, and it is a process that has no finality. The only finality is death, or biological extinction.

When two men cannot reconcile their difference by reason and discussion, and cannot agree to differ, then they resort to fighting. Their neighbours pull them apart and the state of our civilization or social morality is exalted enough to make such men feel ashamed of their behaviour.

When a few score men lose their reason and threaten to fight, then it is called a riot, and these men are restrained by their neighbours through professional keepers-of-the-peace called police. But the men who lost their reason are no longer so ashamed of themselves.

When a large part of a nation loses its reason and threatens to fight, then it is called a rebellion. Police are no longer adequate and the two halves of the nation must fight it out. Nowadays the side that can command the greatest number of tanks and aeroplanes suppresses the other side and that is called a victory for order and justice.

When two nations lose their reason and begin to fight, it is called a war, and there is now no longer the slightest trace of shame. To fight becomes a high moral duty, blessed by the churches. Each nation is united. It is a mass renunciation of reason, it is mass insanity. And there is no limit to what D. H. Lawrence called "the abysmal insanity of the normal masses."

This abysmal insanity is now world-wide. It engulfs Europe and Asia, Africa and Australia, and now spreads to America.

When Bedlam is universal it is the sane man who is accused of being abnormal. A sane man in an asylum has not much chance of being taken seriously. And if the lunatics

are violent and break out of bounds, he is powerless to restrain them.

I wish this was a metaphor. I wish I were speaking to you in parables. But it is a strictly scientific description of the world we are now living in. We are living a world seized with mass insanity. And it requires an almost superhuman effort to remain sane in such a world.

But assuming we retain our whole minds, our sanity, what then can we do?

Frankly, I do not think we can do anything spectacular. We are helpless. We have no tanks, we have no aeroplanes. We are a handful of peaceful men and women caught in the mad rush of millions of madmen.

Willy-nilly we are carried in the irresistible swirl of military and industrial conscription, of crushing taxation and poverty, of death and destruction. We are condemned to live in an epoch of physical misery and social degradation.

But one thing we retain, which all other people have lost; our spiritual calmness, the still voice of reason.

It is a precious possession which we have to carry through this dark age, and this we can do in the immemorial way in which truth has always survived tyranny, neglect and persecution.

The true believers in freedom are being driven to the catacombs again, and it was from the catacombs that a faith which was to transform the world once emerged.

That faith, in all its social and ethical implications, has long since been abandoned by the Church which is its official embodiment.

We here are nearer to the spirit of the catacombs than any other group of men in the world.

Let us act in the spirit of the catacombs, forming our cells, sending out our preachers, striving to throw out the evil spirits which possess the masses.

But the modern evangelist must work mainly through the printed word, and that is why we must establish and maintain a press, a press from which the Friends of Freedom can pour out an endless stream of pamphlets and periodicals, all testifying to this truth: **That man is born equal, to share equally the fruits of the earth, and to live in mutual friendship with all his kind.**

Factory Workers or Cannon Fodder

By Tom Brown

IN childhood days we played a robust game—"Pull devil; pull baker." Contending parties seized a victim by legs and arms and played a tug-of-war, encouraged by the cries of spectators. It was a good game from the spectators' point of view, but the victim often broke loose and vigorously objected. Such a game is being played by the Ministry of Labour and the T.U.C., with the skilled industrial worker as the rope, ball or shuttlecock between the combatants. Bevin seems determined to force into the army large numbers of skilled workers, while certain trade union leaders, with Sir Walter Citrine as spokesmen, seek to retain such men in the factories, declaring equipment to be more important than masses of soldiers.

The dispute is not entirely one of tactics, for there are certain economic and social interests expressed by the combatants. Sir Walter Citrine largely relies on the craft unions, and his chief supporters in this struggle are the leaders of the craft unions. Particularly the Amalgamated Engineering Union. Now supposing large numbers of skilled men are put into uniform—the craft unions lose hundreds of thousands of young members, leaving a heavy balance of older members who are more likely to draw sick, death or superannuation benefits. So drastic a change is likely to upset the delicate actuarial basis of the capitalistic craft unions.

Furthermore, men are to be replaced by women who cannot join the craft unions (craft trade unions do not recognise the female sex), and who will be invited to join the Transport and General Workers' Union, of which Ernest Bevin is the General Secretary. So the craft union leaders have all to lose and Bevin has all to gain. But a third party threatens to enter the conflict for the right to dispose of the bodies of the skilled factory workers.

ALIAS THE COMMUNIST PARTY

On Sunday, the 19th of October, there gathered in London 1,237 "delegates" calling themselves the "National Conference of

Shop Stewards," answering the call of the National Council of Shop Stewards. In advance this "conference" was denounced by the A.E.U. and the trade union movement generally, while the "National Council" has been denounced as a Communist body by these same trade unions frequently since its formation. The denunciation is well based, for this high-sounding body is only the same old Communist Party wearing another hat. However, the rally was well boosted by the Press. "Production is all. That was the keynote." "Some of the men who spoke yesterday were leaders of shop stewards in the last war. In those days they sometimes called meetings to demand strikes." (Daily Express, 20/10/'41.) Hmm, not unlike the much-reviled Labour Cabinet ministers. "Workers should observe the highest standard of timekeeping and be prepared to work all hours necessary to increase output," said the Communist Chairman, Mr. Swanson. Giddy-up!

Swanson then entered the Bevin-Citrine battle. "He made this bold proposal: Skilled men should be prepared to train women to take their places in the factories, and then strengthen the armed forces." (Daily Express.) All except Mr. Swanson and his pals, of course! The "conference" warmed up Said Kennedy of Liverpool, "It was becoming fashionable to blame the managements for inefficiencies. Let us put our own house in order, because I know of men who have returned to our factory under the influence of alcohol and thus crippled production."

"If a man does not pull his weight he should be put into the Army at 2s. a day." (Daily Express.)

It is interesting that Mr. Kennedy should declare for 2s. a day, for, being skilled men, they are entitled to from 6s. to 12s. a day, if conscripted to the armed forces, but such extravagant wages are too high for the Communists. Two bob a day! Well, we know what life would be like if the Communist Party gained power, and now we know just how low the wages would be, and I think the "conference" has given us a glimpse of how the Bolsheviks rule Russian factory workers.

IN DEFENCE OF DEMOCRACY

The Communists stood no nonsense from any revolutionary infants who strayed into the "conference."

"Second distinction of the conference was that a revolutionary proposal that the workers should take over the factories and introduce Sovietism was squashed by the conference organisers *without even being read out to the delegates.*" (Daily Express.)

Just to show them they were fighting for democracy. But that was not the only democratic innovation. Before the meeting delegates wishing to speak had to submit their names and a *summary of their remarks* in writing to the Standing Orders Committee who then gave or withheld permission to speak.

A curious thing happened during the discussion of the production committees the Communist Party is

attempting to set up to assist factory managements to get more work out of their employees. A woman delegate warned the conference that they would be used against the workers and even against the people who formed them even as the Labour leaders are used. Curiously enough she was applauded, but when Swanson replied, bitterly attacking her and shouting the usual Stalinist reply to everything, "Fifth columnist!" he also was loudly applauded by the same people.

The conference later expressed its warm appreciation of the splendid support of the once-hated capitalist Press. The Press was kind; it had done everything to make the conference a success. Special thanks went to the News Chronicle, Sunday Pictorial and the Daily Mirror.

WHO SHALL HAVE THE BODY?

Bevin has recently declared his intention of abolishing the group system of reservation, that is, reservation by principle or by occupation, and substituting personal, individual selection. This method was partially used during the war of 1914-18. Often a young man who claimed a rise in wages (even a quite legitimate rise) would find himself swept into the army. The same weapon was used by the French authorities in the present war. It proved a most deadly weapon, for not only were workshop militants put into the army, they were picked for special battalions and pushed well into the front; they were marked for destruction.

In the war of 1914-18 the use of this weapon by the Government was greatly checked by the resistance of the shop stewards committees which then everywhere sprang into life. Unfortunately such militant committees do not exist now, and where the Communists have been able to gain control of existing shop stewards committees they have turned into the baser organs of the factory management.

A significant warning has been sent up by the Daily Mirror on the 9th of October. The Mirror stated that the Communist "National Council of Shop Stewards" would support Bevin in his fight with Citrine, that is, they would, as Swanson declared, be in favour of pushing more skilled men into the army. But, said the Mirror, they would claim the right to select the men to be conscripted. Said the Mirror, approvingly, the "shop stewards" would know best who was working hard and who was not pulling his weight. (It is curious how the Daily Mirror and the Communists always apply to the workers this "pulling his weight" term, a term originally applied to cart horses.) In plain words, the Communists posing as shop stewards are to be workshop spies, a factory Gestapo; that, at least, is their ambition.

It would be interesting to see the industrial worker take a hand in this game, to see the bone jump up and bite the quarrelling dogs. Unfortunately this war has not yet created the organs of struggle which developed in the last. The last war largely discredited the bureaucracy of the unions, but the shop stewards' movement won great respect. Now because of Communists masquerading as a shop stewards' movement, the very name is becoming distasteful; it may yet be hated by the workers. Once it meant a class-conscious militant, the faithful spokesman of his class. Now it is becoming the

THE RED

"The Strategic Retreat"

"**T**O-DAY we have nothing to do but sit and smile while Stalin smashes Hitler," declared the Fabian Bernard Shaw on the day the Reichswehr invaded Russia (*News-Chronicle*, 23.6.'41). Since then the German Army has advanced in several places more than 700 miles inside the Russian frontiers. Nearly half a million square miles, which, according to the *Manchester Guardian* (27.10.'41), are inhabited by "not less than 50,000,000, or more than one-quarter of the population of the USSR, are in enemy-occupied territory."

This retreat has been at every step explained as "being in accordance with strategy." It will be followed "by swift counter-attacks of other tank columns" (Ivor Montagu, "The Red Army: 50 questions answered," p. 8). But the swift counter-attacks have not prevented the Nazis from advancing to Minsk and Smolensk, and now to Moscow itself, 800 miles inside the border.

"Unprepared"

Stalinist apologists then put forward the excuse that the USSR was not prepared for war. Vernon Bartlett, however, states that "for almost a generation they have been brought up to expect an attack on their country." A recent number of the *Bulletin of International News* computes that in the five years previous to June, 1941, the USSR spent on armaments a sum almost exactly equal to the Nazi expenditure for the five years previous to September, 1939. The clearest denial of the "unprepared" theory, however, comes from the C.P. itself. Montagu states that the Red Army is mechanised "more than any other . . . Military experts at the Kiev manoeuvres in 1936 calculated that in European USSR (that is, excluding the Far East), the Red Army possesses at least 10,000 tanks. In the battles in France in 1940 the Germans used 7,500 tanks, about their total strength at that time. Voroshilov said that the average horse-power per Red Army man was 7.74 in 1934, and 13 in 1939. *It is not likely that the USSR has allowed itself to be overtaken since.*" He adds that "in 1938 Voroshilov gave the salvo per minute of a German 'rifle-corps' as 58.4 tons of metal, and of a Red Army 'rifle-corps' as 79.5 tons." (pp.8-9). During the Russo-Finnish war "ammunition was piled up for use by guns which were firing at one time 300,000 shells a day." (Geoffrey Cox, "The Red Army Moves.") Finally, Montagu declares that the

term applied to a Stalinist political acrobat, an unprincipled factory spy.

There are thousands of good, honest-to-goodness shop stewards, but they are not nearly so noisy as the Stalinists. Let the honest stewards assert themselves, guard their good name, and revivify the workshop committees. Danger is ahead. The enemy is plotting. They want your bodies. But to build a movement in the factories, as they did in the last war, the workers must kick out the Stalinist class traitors.

ARMY

Red Army is "infinitely" stronger than it would have been in 1939. "The Army has had two clear years to build up its power while the whole German economy has been uninterruptedly under strain." (p. 22.) He gives the Soviet population as 193 millions (p. 22), and declares that it "is certain that the USSR possesses more militarily trained man-power than any other country, and that it has had to have millions of men under arms ever since the war began" (p. 8).

"Lack of Supplies"

With further failures the blame has been increasingly turned on to the inactivity of Russia's Allies, although it used to be the boast of the "Russia To-day Society" that the Soviet Union could withstand the attacks of any Power or combination of Powers. Now, however, it is lack of supplies; out with the "men of Munich," and three cheers for Stalin's new chum Beaverbrook!

Let us quote the Stalinists once more: "The USSR has enormous material resources. Of all the countries in the world it is now—thanks to the Five-Year-Plans—the most nearly independent. Even rubber—which the USA lacks—grows in the form of a special plant bred by Soviet scientists" (Ivor Montagu, p. 18). "All the vital industry is tucked away far from the frontier . . . the great war industries are situated in the Urals—and further away even, in Siberia—difficult of access to any invader." (p. 19) "Colonel Bulow, the German air expert, stated in 1935 that in a few years the Soviet air fleet would number 10,000; he pointed out that only the USSR and the USA had the industry and resources to manufacture airplanes and air engines on a mass scale indefinitely. The following year he wrote that it was unlikely that any other country would ever be able to catch up with the USSR in this field" (p. 14, quoted from H. J. A. Wilson's "USSR Air Force" in *Aeronautics* for June, 1941). "Not long ago Kuznetsov (the commander of the Red Navy) declared that the USSR had more submarines than Germany, Italy and Japan put together" (p. 17). And so on.

Napoleon once said that, in war, the moral factor is to the material as 3 to 1. It is clear that the Red Army was of enormous size, well-equipped—allowing for exaggeration—and well-prepared. The claims for Soviet industry are also probably exaggerated, but not sufficiently to account for the failures of the Red Army. Following Napoleon's dictum, therefore, we must examine the morale factor. The Freedom Press pamphlet, "The Russian Myth," has briefly outlined the tyranny and oppression that the Bolsheviks have laid on the Russian workers and peasants. The defence of the "workers' state" is not likely to appeal to them much more than did the defence of the Tsarist regime in 1914-17. Indeed, the occupation of the Ukraine in less than four months is a sufficient answer, in itself, to those who claimed that "the defence of the Soviet workers' revolutionary conquests" would ensure the integrity of the Soviet

borders. The Russian workers had already unhappily lost that defensive battle in 1918, with the consolidation of the power of Lenin's monolithic party. With regard to the social constitution of the "revolutionary army," the Stalinists themselves have again succeeded in spilling the beans.

Constitution of the Red Army

First, it is a conscript army, every boy being liable for military service at 19, and exemptions appear to go only to students undergoing the higher forms of education. Since the fees for the latter are beyond the reach of the Soviet workers, such means of exemption are presumably only open to the sons of wealthy bureaucrats. There is no conscientious objection, as religious objection was abolished two years ago, "as there had been no applications for exemption on this ground for the previous two years" (Montagu, p. 3). This seems rather surprising in view of the strength of the Tolstoyans and other pacifist sects which flourished in Russia during the last war, and in view of the apparent maintenance of religious exercises even to-day. Montagu does not state what penalties are laid down as deterrents from conscientious objection.

The officer "is a trained professional" (p. 5), and "officers' pay is on a level with that of professional workers in civil life. In the last five or six years it has been increased from 250 to 350 per cent. Soldiers' pay, as is usual in conscription countries, is at pocket-money level" (p. 6). Pay in the French army, the most typical continental conscript army, was 75 centimes, or less than a penny, a day. N.C.O.s are chosen from above by the Battalion Commander (i.e., corresponding to a British Colonel) (p. 4). Special quarters, we are told, are provided for the officers and their wives (p. 6). Then, "Every soldier has exactly the same rights as a civilian" (p. 7). That is to say, he has no rights at all beyond "freedom" to vote, etc., that exists only on paper (cf. "The Russian Myth"). One of the most remarkable auxiliaries of the Red Army is the "Organization of Officers' Wives." "Most women in the USSR," says Ivor Montagu, "are not content to be housewives only, but have a life outside the home as well. But women married to professional soldiers, that is, officers, find their own career often complicated by the demands of service transfer on their husbands, whom naturally they wish to accompany. Hence the 'Organization of Officers' Wives,' an auxiliary body that—among other work—has bravely maintained whole field hospitals under fire" (p. 18). Not soldiers' wives, not even sergeants' wives, but officers' wives! Class distinction could hardly be outlined more naively. After all this, it is a bit hard to swallow Montagu's remarks about the morale of the Red Army. It is good, he claims, among other reasons, because "they have their own country to fight for (it is not 'owned' by private owners)." One might here recall the old story of the delegation of peasants to present a grievance to Lenin; when the latter asked them if it were not true that they now owned the land, an old man answered, "Yes, little father, it is true that before we did not own the

(continued on page 10)

The aims and objects of the IWMA reproduced below were adopted by the Constitutive Congress of the IWMA (Berlin, December, 1922) and modified by the Fourth (Madrid, 1931) and Fifth (Paris, 1935) Congresses. Anarcho-Syndicalist Organizations all over the world have adhered to the principles of the IWMA. The CNT in Spain, the SAC in Sweden, which has a large number of adherents among the working class, are affiliated to the IWMA. In this country War Commentary and the Freedom Press have put forward the ideas expressed below, and the IWMA Press Service Bulletin has recently expressed its endorsement of our views.

Aims and Objects

I. INTRODUCTION

THE time-honoured struggle between exploited and exploiters has assumed menacing proportions. All-powerful Capital tottering for a moment after the devastating world war and, above all, after the great Russian Revolution and the revolutions—even although less important—of Hungary and Germany, is again raising its hideous head. Notwithstanding the internal struggles that rend the bourgeoisie and cosmopolitan capitalism, the latter thoroughly understand the need to attack the working-class with more unison and force and bind it to the triumphant chariot of Capital.

Capitalism is becoming organised and from the defensive in which it found itself, is passing to the offensive, on all fronts, against the working-class exhausted by bloody wars and miscarried revolutions. This offensive has its profound origin in two well-determined causes: first, the confusion of idea and principles that exists in the ranks of the labour movement, the lack of clarity and cohesion regarding the present and future aims of the working-class; and the division into innumerable camps, very often enemy camps. In a word, the weakness and disorganisation of the labour movement. Next, it is a result, above all, of the subsequent failure of the Russian Revolution which, at the moment of its outbreak and in reason also of the grand principles enunciated by it in November, 1917, had raised the greatest hopes among the proletariat of the world, and which has degenerated to the rank of a political revolution having served to maintain the conquest of state power in the hands of the Communist Party whose sole aim is to monopolise all the political and social life of the country. This deviation of a social revolution into a political revolution has had as a result the hypertrophy of State Socialism, the consequence of which has been the development of a capitalist system just as exploiting and dominating as any other system of bourgeois origin. The necessity of re-establishing capitalism in Russia has been the aim of world capitalism. State Socialism, called

International

“communism” saved bourgeois capitalism by appealing to it for assistance—to save the revolution!

It is thus thanks to these two disorganising elements—confusion in the ranks of the proletariat and capitalist bolshevism—that industrial and financial Capital feels its forces increasing and its chances of rebirth augmenting.

There is but one sole method against this concentrated and international attack of the exploiters of all kinds: that is the immediate organisation of the proletarian army in an organism of struggle embracing all the revolutionary workers of all lands in one sole granite-like block against which every capitalist venture will be broken and which will end by crushing capitalism completely.

Several attempts have been made already in this sense. Two of these still are hoping to be successful. These are the Amsterdam and Moscow Internationals. But these carry within them the poisonous germ of self-destruction. The Amsterdam International, lost in reformism, considers that the only solution to the social problem lies in class collaboration, in the harmonising of Labour and Capital and in the peaceful revolution patiently awaited and accomplished with neither violence nor struggle and with the consent and approval of the bourgeoisie. On its side, the Moscow International considers that the Communist Party is the supreme arbitrator of all revolution, and that, in the revolutions to come, whatsoever is not controlled by the Communist Party will have to be dispersed and consumed. It is to be regretted that there still exists in the ranks of the conscious and organised proletariat, tendencies which support this outlook which in theory and practice can have no other meaning than the organisation of the State—that is to say, the organisation of slavery—the wages system, the police, the army, political bondage. In a word, the so-called dictatorship of the proletariat, which can never be anything other than a check to the direct expropriating force and a suppression of the real sovereignty of the working-class and which becomes thereby, the iron dictatorship of a political clique over the proletariat. That is the hegemony of authoritarian communism—which only means—the worst form of authoritarianism, political Caesarism, and the destruction of the individual.

Against the offensive of Capital on the one hand and against the politicians of all degrees on the other, the revolutionary workers of the world must erect a true international association of the workers wherein each member will understand that the final emancipation of the workers will not be possible except when the workers themselves, as workers, in their economic organisations are prepared, not only to take possession of the land and factories, but also to administer them in common and in such a fashion that they will continue production.

With this perspective before it, the International Congress of Revolutionary Syndicalists, assembled in Berlin in December, 1922, adopted the following principles elaborated from the preliminary Conference of Revolutionary Syndicalists of June, 1922.

Working-Men's Association

II. PRINCIPLES OF REVOLUTIONARY SYNDICALISM

1 **R**EVOLUTIONARY Syndicalism basing itself on the class-war, aims at the union of all manual and intellectual workers in economic fighting organisation struggling for their emancipation from the yoke of wage slavery and from the oppression of the State. Its goal consists in the re-organisation of social life on the basis of Free Communism, by means of the revolutionary action of the working-class itself. It considers that the economic organisations of the proletariat are alone capable of realising this aim, and, in consequence, its appeal is addressed to workers in their capacity of producers and creators of social riches, in opposition to the modern political labour parties which can never be considered at all from the points of view of economic re-organisation.

2 **R**EVOLUTIONARY Syndicalism is the confirmed enemy of every form of economic and social monopoly, and aims at its abolition by means of economic communes and administrative organs of field and factory workers on the basis of a free system of councils, entirely liberated from subordination to any Government or political party. Against the politics of the State and of parties it erects the economic organisation of labour, against the Government of men, it sets up the management of things. Consequently, it has not for its object the conquest of political power, but the abolition of every State function in social life. It considers that, along with the monopoly of property, should disappear also the monopoly of domination, and that any form of the State, including the form of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" will always be the creator of new monopolies and the new privileges: it could never be an instrument of liberation.

3 **T**HE double task of Revolutionary Syndicalism is as follows: on the one hand it pursues the daily revolutionary struggle for the economic, social and intellectual improvement of the working class within the framework of existing society, on the other hand, its ultimate goal is to raise the masses to the independent management of production and distribution, as well as to the transfer into their own hands of all the ramifications of social life. It is convinced that the organisation of an economic system, resting on the producer and built up from below upwards, can never be regulated by Governmental decrees, but only by the common action of all manual and intellectual workers in every branch of industry, by the conduct of factories by the producers themselves in such a way that each group, workshop or branch of industry, is an autonomous section of the general economic organisation, systematically developing production and distribution in the interests of the entire community in accordance with a well-determined plan and on the basis of mutual agreements.

4 **R**EVOLUTIONARY Syndicalism is opposed to every centralist tendency and organisation, which is but borrowed from the State and the Church, and which stifles methodically every spirit of initiative and every independent thought. Centralism is an artificial organisation from top to bottom, which hands over en bloc to a handful of men, the regulation of the affairs of a whole community. The individual becomes, therefore, nothing but an automaton directed and moved from above. The interests of the community yield place to the privileges of a few, variety is replaced by uniformity: personal responsibility by a soulless discipline; real education by a veneer. It is for this reason that Revolutionary Syndicalism advocates federalist organisation; that is to say, an organisation, from below upwards, of a free union of all forces on the basis of common ideas and interests.

5 **R**EVOLUTIONARY Syndicalism rejects all parliamentary activity and all co-operation with legislative bodies. Universal suffrage, on however wide a basis, cannot bring about the disappearance of the flagrant contradictions existing in the very bosom of modern society; the parliamentary system has but one object, viz., to lend the appearance of legal right to the reign of lies and social injustice, to persuade slaves to fix the seal of the law onto their own enslavement.

6 **R**EVOLUTIONARY Syndicalism rejects all arbitrarily fixed political and national frontiers, and it sees in nationalism nothing else but the religion of the modern State, behind which are concealed the material interests of the possessing classes. It recognises only regional differences, and demands for every group the right of self-determination in harmonious solidarity with all other associations of an economic, territorial or national order.

7 **I**T is for these same reasons that Revolutionary Syndicalism opposes militarism in all its forms, and considers anti-militarist propaganda as one of the most important tasks in the struggle against the present system. In the first instance, it urges individual refusal of military service, and especially, organised boycott against the manufacture of war material.

8 **R**EVOLUTIONARY Syndicalism stands on the platform of direct action, and supports all struggles which are not in contradiction with its aims, viz., the abolition of economic monopoly and of the domination of the State. The methods of fight are the strike, the boycott, sabotage, etc., Direct action finds its most pronounced expression in the general strike which, at the same time, from the point of view of Revolutionary Syndicalism, ought to be the prelude to the social revolution.

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land, but we reaped the fruits; now it is we who own the land, but you who take the fruits." The Stalinists say there are "no individual owners there to make profits from their fight or work . . . no inequality of class . . . no caste system in the armed forces . . ." But the all-pervading bureaucratic State exploits the labour of the workers, and so is able to confer on the parasitic bureaucracy, and the army officers, whose pay "in the last five or six years has been increased from 250 to 350 per cent.," an enhanced standard of living, while the workers live in grinding poverty. It is these things that explain the retreats of the Red Army.

Of discipline, Ivor Montagu mildly remarks, "Discipline is very strict. . . Officers are saluted on duty and off duty. There must be immediate obedience to all commands, and penalties are strictly enforced." This was written just after the German attack of June 22nd. Even the Stalinists are hardly brazen enough to give the true picture of the Red Army Statutes regarding discipline. Those introduced on October 12th, 1940, i.e., during peace time, lay it down that "in case of insubordination, the commander has the right to apply all measures of coercion up to and including the application of force and firearms. The commander bears no responsibility for the consequence in case he finds it necessary to apply force and firearms in order to compel an insubordinate to fulfil a command and to restore discipline and order . . . the commander who does not in such instances evince firmness, resoluteness, and who does not apply all measures to fulfil an order is remitted to trial before the court-martial." (Red Star, No. 242, October 15th, 1940. Quoted in *The Word* for September, 1941). The article in *The Word* quotes V. Ulrich, presiding judge in the Moscow Trials, in an article in the *Red Star*, special organ of the Red Army, for October 22nd, 1940: "The disciplinary statutes considerably extend the right of commanders as regards the use of force and firearms. Comradely relations between soldiers and officers (made much of by Ivor Montagu—see p. 5) are no more. The hail-fellow-well-met spirit in the relation-

9 ALTHOUGH enemies of all forms of organised violence in the hands of any Government, the Syndicalists do not forget that the decisive struggle between the Capitalism of today and the Free Communism of tomorrow, will not take place without serious collisions. They recognise violence, therefore, as a means of defence against the methods of violence of the ruling classes, in the struggle of the revolutionary people for the expropriation of the means of production and of the land. Just as this expropriation cannot be commenced and carried to a successful issue except by the revolutionary economic organisation of the workers, so also the defence of the revolution should be in the hands of these economic organisations, and not in those of any military or other organisations operating outside the economic organs.

10 IT is only in the revolutionary economic organisations of the working class that is to be found the power apt to carry out its emancipation, as well as the creative energy necessary for the reorganisation of society on the basis of Free Communism.

ships between a commander and a subordinate can have no place in the Red Army. Discussion of any kind is absolutely prohibited among the subordinates." To underline the position still further, Lt.-General V. Kurdyumov's article in *Pravda* for October 6th, 1940, states that: "Grievances may be introduced only personally and individually. Submission of group grievances or grievances of others is prohibited. No more group declarations, no more joint discussions—whether concerning an order, or bad food, or any other topic—all this comes under the heading of 'insubordination' and for it a soldier may be shot on the spot without so much as a court-martial, hearing or investigation, if a superior officer solely and personally so decides." (*The Word*, September, 1941).

This terroristic discipline, the crushing out of individual initiative, and the ghastly police supervision that characterizes Lenin's and Stalin's regime, are more than sufficient to explain the defeats of the Red Army, to underline the difference in morale between 1941 and 1918. But the Russian retreats raise another question which ought to be faced. The Nazi regime is not less terroristic and reactionary than the Bolsheviks'. Yet the German Army after 18 months' continuous fighting still marches to victories. Why is the German morale not as low as that of the Russians?

Hitler did not, like Lenin, lead the workers to totalitarian state tyranny after promising them emancipation and freedom and internationalism. His movement has always been merely a nationalistic jingo one of restoring Germany from the Versailles enslavement. Its ideals were never high enough—as Lenin's claimed to be—to provoke the intense disappointment and social frustration brought about in the Russian revolutionary masses by the Bolshevik betrayal. Regarded in the light of its original promises, the Nazi regime has been successful, while the failure of Stalinism even remotely to resemble Communism is only too glaringly obvious.

Historical origins apart, however, there is another available hint as to why the German army morale still appears to be high. The *Manchester Guardian* (14.10.'41), reviewing William L. Shirer's "Berlin Diary," states that "Shirer describes a military equalitarianism and a comradeship between officers and men which must be unique, unless there is something like it in the Red Army. Officers and men in the German Navy, he says, receive the same rations, and he saw something of the sort in the Army, too." The exigencies of maintaining power will probably compel the Nazi Party to tighten up this army discipline, even to destroy unity within the army in order to diminish the power of a potential rival) this necessity is what lay behind the great Red Army purge of 1937, when Tukhachevsky and other high officers of the Red Army were liquidated—a purge which itself will have contributed materially to the present low state of the Red Army). But, at present, the relative "equalitarianism" described by Shirer (if true) is the probable explanation of the difference between Russian and German morale, in spite of the many features which, as totalitarian regimes, the Bolsheviks and the Nazis have in common. It is certainly enough to explain why the German soldier has not been converted to revolutionism by the "Glorious Red Army."

The Feeding of Britain

THE agricultural policy of British Governments (in so far as one can term a policy the series of expedients which followed the realisation during the 30's that farming was a moribund industry) has always been founded on the assumption that it is impossible to feed the people of Britain from the soil of these islands; and that the most that can be done is to maintain home agriculture by subsidies of one kind or another, to enable them to reduce substantially the proportion of food imported in wartime. This attitude is a natural development of the general attitude of imperialist capitalism, which depends for its continuance on large imports of food and other consumption goods to balance the exports of manufactured goods, without which, under the capitalist system, industrial concerns in general would not survive. It is not, therefore, surprising that it should be accepted by the majority of economists. In such a fabulous task as the justification of capitalist economy, any fiction can be maintained. Indeed, so deeply rooted both in Right and Left Wing circles is the idea that Britain's economy must be based on the factory, that even Stalinists have admitted to me that there has been no constructive survey of agriculture since Kropotkin.

In fact, as I shall endeavour to demonstrate, the feeding of Britain from its own soil is an object not so distant as is generally imagined.

Just previous to the war, we produced at home 25 per cent. of wheat consumed, 55 per cent. of barley, 92 per cent. of oats, practically all our roots and potatoes, and beet sufficient for 30 per cent. of our sugar. But from 1870 to 1937 the area under corn crops had fallen from 9½ million to 5 million acres, and that under roots from 3¾ millions to 2 million acres. If we returned to the arable acreages of the peak period of English agriculture, we could produce all our barley, oats, root crops and potatoes, more than half our wheat, and probably the whole of our sugar. Furthermore, the majority of our land is not cultivated to its maximum capacity. In England, the average yield of wheat is 32 bushels

per acre. In Denmark, where the soil is more intensively cultivated, it is 40 bushels. In England, the average yields of barley and oats are 44 and 34 bushels respectively; in Belgium 54 and 40 respectively. These continental figures show an increase of 20 per cent. over the English—and that on soils certainly no more and probably less fertile than average English soils. Again, it has been shown experimentally that it is possible, given favourable conditions, culture and

By
George Woodcock

manuring, to grow more than 110 bushels of wheat and more than 30 tons of potatoes to the acre—the latter comparing with a British average yield of 6½ tons.

It may be objected that an increase in arable land would mean a decrease in the number of livestock it is possible to raise in this country. At present such a decrease is taking place, and the fact that the Government have returned 2,000,000 of the lost acres from grass to arable has been a contributory cause. But it has only been one of the causes, and need not have been even that had the Government's agricultural policy been at all far-sighted.

During the present century arable land has steadily given place to permanent pasture, permanent pasture to rough grazing, and rough grazing to waste land. From 1891 to 1937 the area of ground under crops and permanent grass fell by more than 3½ million acres. Of this approximately half a million acres were lost to the unrestricted building schemes of pre-war days. The rest, over 3 million acres, became rough grazing. This, if it were reclaimed, would give half the acreage taken away from grasslands to return to the 1870 acreage of arable land. In addition, hundreds of thousands of acres of valuable hillside pasture and rough grazing in Scotland, and to a lesser extent in England and Wales, have become useless through the spread of bracken and the

ravages of rabbits. A reclamation of this land and the scandalous deer forests that absorb so many hundreds of square miles of the Highlands would provide much useful grazing land.

The increased growth of root crops and the greater output of pulp from the sugar factories would mean a greater supply of foodstuffs other than grass. In addition—and this is the most important point of all—the crop of grass itself could be greatly increased if it were treated as a crop rather than as a chance blessing from the Almighty. The researches of such experts as Sir R. G. Stapledon have shown that pasture and hay crops can be made to give much higher yields of animal foodstuffs by manuring with artificial fertilisers and by careful selection and blending of the grasses and clovers.

Taking these factors into consideration, it would seem that, with the reclamation of waste land and rough grazing and a scientific treatment of grass crops a much greater yield of forage per acre of non-arable land could be obtained. Thus, far from being decreased, the livestock population might be increased at the same time as a substantial increase in the area of ground under crop.

We now reach the question of what is to be done to make British agriculture sufficiently fruitful to grow an abundance of our essential foods.

Firstly, a radical change will be necessary in land organisation. The trend during the present century has been towards the absorption of the smaller farms into large farms of 300 acres and over. Since 1910 the number of farms of under 50 acres has fallen by nearly 60,000. With large farms comes less intensive cultivation—the farmer has to make a smaller turnover per acre in order to live from his land. On the other hand, the present disadvantage of small farms is that, if the man with 50 acres is to live from his land, he must cultivate it much more fully than the large farmer. Furthermore, the fact that he cannot afford the capital outlay on tractors, etc., makes it necessary for him both to spend a disproportionate amount on labour, and to work to the limit of his own capacity for the very meagre profit that remains. The solution to the problem of land distribution seems to lie in its division into units small enough for intensive cultivation,

worked by groups organised in collectives for the common ownership of the land and mechanical implements.

It is necessary to envisage a steady application of mechanisation and scientific methods to agriculture. If the drudgery of agricultural work is to be ended, then every acre of farmland must be ploughed by a tractor that can turn up 5 acres a day, and every market garden must be cultivated by such implements as the Rototiller which almost supersede digging and hand hoeing. And if the maximum yield is to be obtained from the soil, then the results of research must be applied to the fertilising and cropping of all land in the country. To serve the double end of the efficient distribution of machines and fertilisers, and the conducting and application of agricultural and processing of farm products, the collectives would be organised into regional federations. These in turn would have contacts with machine and chemical factories, and educational and research institutions and form a national syndicate of agriculture.

Such an expansion of agriculture would make room for a considerable increase in the farming population, and in considering the small experiments in farming now in progress, it becomes significant that most of them are made by urban elements, i.e., industrial workers who entered agriculture during a depression, and conscientious objectors who find themselves forced to make the best of farming for the duration of the war. Such town-bred people, free of the conservatism of farming tradition, prove more adaptable to modern methods. Among the smallholders under the county council schemes during the 1920's, and under the land-settlement schemes of the 1930's, the really outstanding successes were gained by industrial workers. And hundreds of young

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This is the second of a series of articles which we intend to publish on the extremely important problem of the Land. We also wish to devote several columns of our Supplement to News from Land-workers, giving information on the experiments now being carried out by communities, C.O.'s, etc. We invite our readers at present working on the land to send us reports of their activities.

F. A. RIDLEY

Part 2*

DIVIDE AND RULE

A STUDY IN BRITISH DIPLOMACY—PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

WE now turn to the contemporary evolution of British diplomacy, to the generation-long struggle between England and her latest rival, Imperial Germany, for world domination; a conflict that approaches its climax as we write these lines. Below, we trace its successive stages.

In her brilliant "Junius" pamphlet (1916) Rosa Luxembourgh has indicated 1898, the date of the decisive Reichstag Naval Bill, as the birth-year of the Anglo-German world-antagonism which has dominated, thus far, the world-politics of this century. We recall how Prussia became itself a great military power in the 18th century, thanks not only to the undoubted military genius of the Machiavellian Fredrick, but, also, to the financial subsidies of Britain, who "balanced" the Prussian army against her French and Russian rivals, present and prospective: a role that she continued against Buonaparte, who would actually have united Europe, at least temporarily, had he only had that minimum amount of luck represented by the "three foggy days" which were alone necessary in the opinion of the Imperial Corsican, to effect the crossing of the Channel and the subsequent conquest of England by the "Grand Army of England" in 1803-4. Waterloo, a joint Anglo-Prussian victory, saw the triumphant vindication of the Balance of Power (1815).

In the 20th century things have been very different. The end of the 19th century saw Germany, already the leading military power on the European continent, since her defeat of Austria in 1866 and France in 1870, become a naval and commercial rival of the British Empire. Soon, with characteristic Teutonic efficiency, she had outstripped all competitors. Britain's three sources of world power, her naval hegemony—the so-called "Freedom of the Seas" (i.e. the right of Britain to close the seas and to blockade

the continent any time that she chose)—her industrial monopoly—or what was left of it!—and last, but not least, "The Balance of Power" on the European continent, all alike, were in deadly danger from this newcomer to the imperialist circle, the Second Reich of the Hohenzollerns.

And England reacted in her traditional way! She forgot all about her earlier political, dynastic and sentimental associations, she "encircled" Germany, in alliance with old enemies, Republican France and Tsarist Russia. The German became the "Hun." The world drifted into the toils of the First Imperialist War, 1914-18.

It is scarcely necessary in these summary paragraphs to expatiate at length upon this so recent event. Suffice it to recall that Britain by exerting all her still vast resources and all her traditional arts; by naval pressure; by a ruthless blockade—that first and most deadly species of "total war"—by fighting to the last Frenchman, the last Belgian, the last Tsar (!) and the last American dollar, just—and only just—succeeded in defeating the colossal German war-machine. The "Carthaginian" Treaty of Versailles—a typical imperialist "settlement"—which "settled" nothing—except the certainty of a second world war!—was the precise measure of the narrow margin by which Germany had herself missed victory. Fear is the proverbial parent of ferocity! (Incidentally, we may add that the contempt of imperialist power-politics for the idealist camouflage by means of which it seeks to deceive its dupes and to enrol its cannon-fodder, has never been better expressed than by Clemenceau's brief comment on the "14 points" of his idealistic colleague, President Wilson: "Why, God only had ten" and it was Clemenceau, and not Wilson, who made the subsequent peace treaties.)

The Versailles group of peace treaties resulted in a 20 years' armistice that endured uneasily down to the present war. This 20 years "peace" represented at once the triumph, and, as is now evident in retrospect, the concurrent swan-song of the age-long Balance of Power. Throughout this entire generation, the victorious Anglo-French combination ruled Europe ideologically through the League of Nations

* Part I of this article appeared in the October issue of WAR COMMENTARY (copies still available, 3d, post free).

—“the Versailles Club,” as it has been happily styled—and physically through the French Army, the “Praetorian Guard” of British imperialism for the twin purposes of holding down Europe and of preventing the armed resurrection of Germany. America having retired into her “insolationist” shell after the fall of the Wilson regime, England and France ruled a weak, divided, and impoverished Europe by their respective military and naval strength—by the French Army plus a fear of blockade. It is hardly necessary to recall the shameless barrage of hypocrisy, humbug, and of stale moral platitudes that pre-eminently characterised this now for ever irrevocably vanished era. We have elsewhere traced its decisive features. (cp. my pamphlet “Wall Street versus Wilhelmstrasse”—ILP publications.)

It is the Achilles heel of British Imperialism that she is a Thalassocracy—a sea-despotism. As such, she lacks the military means to hold down the European continent indefinitely: she can only accomplish this feat indirectly, by means of a mercenary army. (That Britain alone cannot fight the Continent effectively was clearly indicated long ago by Field Marshal von Moltke when he uttered the penetrating axiom that “a wolf cannot fight a whale!”)

From 1919—1940 this gulf was bridged, though less effectually year by year, by means of the French Army. But the effort was too great for a declining nation, industrially in the second rank, with a falling birth-rate, and thrice bled within an ace of death within a century by the two Buonapartes—1793-1815—1870-71—and again in 1914-18. The morbidly insane fear of Germany recovering throughout the Armistice period—expressed in her invasion of the Ruhr in 1923 and in the crazy follies of her “revolver republic” in the separatist Rhineland—represented her acute consciousness that the task of England’s bailiff’s broker on the European continent was beyond her strength, and that her own day was done. (cp. G. E. R. Gedye “The Revolver Republic.”)

She was not mistaken! Zero hour arrived in May-June, 1940, when the punch-drunk French army held out its hand in surrender to the hurricane blitzkrieg of the revived German imperialism of Adolf Hitler’s “Third Reich.” (It is not surely necessary to trace the successive stages in Hitler’s own rise to power. cp. above pamphlet). Now, in September, 1941, England is ejected from every area of the European continent—except for her increasingly insecure hold on Gibraltar. Nor, at the moment these lines are written, does her present traditional last effort to fight to the last Russian in the good old way look like being any more successful than was her effort last year (after Dunkirk) to induce the French Army to immolate itself three times in a single lifetime on the blood-stained altar of the Balance of Power. The French, after all, have the reputation of being a logical people: one can therefore hardly blame them for preferring even Marshal Petain’s inglorious regime to the literal suicides’ club proffered them—from behind the shelter of the British Navy—by Mr. Winston Churchill, the hero of the Dardenelles, or his French satellite, the fire-eating General de Gaulle, who did not himself stay in France to fight it out to a finish.

Today, we repeat, Europe is united, the Third Reich is supreme, Adolf Hitler, however sinister his

motives and however criminal his deeds—is indicated as an authentic political genius, as the true heir of the great Buonaparte, as, whatever his subsequent fortunes, insured by that very fact of an enduring niche in the permanent history of a Continent given over to power-politics. England is forcibly ejected from Europe, the power of her armed satellites is broken, the Balance of Power has passed from the world of reality to that of mere phrases. It is “the end of an old song.”

Can it be revived? Can Britain, increasingly integrated with the transatlantic colossus; can Anglo-American imperialism succeed in its present avowed aims of overhauling and defeating German air power, in invading the continent in a new and greater “peninsula war,” in restoring the pre-war world and in *disuniting* Europe. For, beyond the hazy cloud of nebulous “war aims” this is beyond question, the fundamental goal of Whitehall: to restore pre-war Europe to the last collar stud and button—where the continent was at dawn on September the 1st, 1939, when Hitler sent the Reichswehr over the Polish frontier.

Indeed, so far as Europe itself is concerned, we can accurately summarise the real “war aims” of the respective combatants as:

The “New Order” of unity without freedom, versus the “Old Order” of freedom without unity! A sorry choice of evils. As far as progress is concerned it is a case of six of one and half a dozen of the other. To unite Europe by force; to divide it by force: both “solutions” are equally reactionary.

Leaving the evils of Hitler’s “New Order” to the British press, which can be relied upon to do them full justice, we confine ourselves to answering the alternative question: can the Anglo-Saxon Thalassocracies successfully invade and reconquer the European continent? We confess that we do not know the answer to this leading question—we accordingly leave it to God—plus his voluble representatives upon earth, the amateur strategists. But we do feel ourselves able to answer an even more fundamental question: even if they can, they could not possibly hold it when the first shock of defeat was past. Without the French Army, England has no dependable garrison on the Continent. We fear that bold musketeer, General de Gaulle, will prove hardly even a duodecimo Foch! And as it was only the French Army that kept Germany down and war away for 20 years, it can be stated with absolute certainty that the European enslavement to the Thalassocracies, if it does come about, will lead to the third world war, and the revolt of the Continent in a very few years. This time “the war to end war” is an even less plausible proposition than it was last time!

We conclude then, that the historic Balance of Power is dead and damned. Historic evolution itself has put European unity on the order of the day! That unity may be achieved temporarily by violence in a Fascist “New Order.” That way also lies eventual revolution and war. We view the present complex situation as capable only of one satisfactory termination: in a European socialist federation that includes England with the continent; the traditional divider along with the traditionally divided: in, to use a political expression, the United Socialist States of Europe.

Realism on Russia

ONE of the most depressing characteristics of our times is its indifference to truth. From this attitude arises the refusal of modern political movements to question the fundamental principles of their ideologies in the light of historical events. Their purpose being the acquisition of political power, they must acknowledge the necessity of fanaticism to achieve it, and thus they separate politics from social-meaning, and erect obstacles to understanding.

The latest Freedom Press pamphlet, entitled "The Russian Myth," places before the reader an objective analysis of the Russian State, showing how reasonable, from an understanding of the internal situation of Russia, is the collapse of that mighty Red Army of which we have heard so much in recent years.

Russia has for centuries been the arena of social tragedy. Raised to apocalyptic heights of revolutionary fervour in 1917, she became the beacon of hope

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C.O.s who have never before attempted any form of farm or garden work, are embarking on small farms or market gardens and often gaining very good results. The most interesting experiments from a social point of view are the community farms. Unfortunately, many have too little capital, or are attempting to keep too many people on their ground, but there are some, such as the community farm at Elmsett, which seem to be succeeding well.

These small ventures can, however, be regarded as little more than experiments. It is unlikely that they will have enough influence on farmers and farmworkers to make the beginning of a new movement on the land, and it is doubtful whether they will survive if they run foul of the new vested interests in land. For one of the most dangerous developments in the land situation is the tendency of financial and industrial concerns to buy land, partly as a solid, tangible form of investment and partly as a means of spending excess profit. A large canning firm in Cambridgeshire is buying every farm it can and thus becoming one of the great landed interests of the Eastern Counties. In other parts of the country, banks, insurance companies and other organisations are steadily buying land, so that we are faced with the probability of a new form of landed proprietorship arising, which may entirely change the situation of British agriculture, and will certainly make any revolutionary change in agricultural organisation all the more difficult.

to all oppressed and suffering people. The price the Russians paid for this in years of civil war, foreign invasion, famine, disease and spiritual mutilation, can never be measured by any comparable social upheaval. Today again, Russia is embroiled in the maelstrom of imperialist war and bleeds whilst other States profit from her agonies. It is to try and reveal the reasons for this that the "Russian Myth" is printed. To show the course of Russia's political path since 1917, counter-revolution following on civil war, disillusionment and despair overtaking and submerging the sublime aspiration of struggling peasants and workers, until we see at the opening of the second world war, Russia as a State of Socialism and Freedom existing only in the minds of those still clinging to the false notion of Socialism through totalitarianism. Freedom through slavery, spiritual emancipation through economic bondage.

There are many thousands of sincere people who from the highest motives support the political campaign for "All Aid to Russia," and who are willing to hitch the workers' struggle in this country to the war chariot of their masters, in order to save what they think is socialism in Russia. It is my hope that this pamphlet will reach some of these people, and that if they should read these words, I would plead that they set aside for once any dogmatic beliefs they have regarding Russia, clear their minds for a half-hour of any political fanaticism, and read this little pamphlet through carefully. It is not an attack on Russia, not a cheap denunciation against Communism, but a serious attempt to explain Russian policy since the Revolution. It may make no difference to the beliefs of readers regarding Russian Communism, but at least let them read it. There is so much polemical tripe written nowadays which does nothing but confuse the reader and eventually disgust him with political intrigue. This pamphlet is in a different category. I recommend it with feeling and with the hope that it may pierce the curtain of fanatical ideology and start someone on the path of free and critical examination of political propaganda.

FREDRICK LOHR.

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THE Reconstruction Fund has been increased this month by £53, and we have now passed the £200 mark. This is still far from our goal of £500 by the end of December, and with only two months to go we have still to raise £300. This calls for a real effort from the majority of our readers who have left an appeal for Funds unanswered.

Owing to pressure on our space, this month's appeal must be limited to these few lines, but we hope that our readers will none the less make special efforts to make this month a record month for the Reconstruction Fund.

All contributions should be made out to Freedom Press, crossed /& Co./ and sent to us at 27, Belsize Road, London, N.W.6.

RECONSTRUCTION FUND

October 1941

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